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Subject: [External] Oil, gas industry turns to infrastructure fight

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By Ben Lefebvre

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The American Petroleum Institute is pressing for any new federal infrastructure package to overhaul the permitting process that companies say has slowed investments needed to expand the industry.

The industry's focus in any infrastructure package would be "less about funding sources and more about expediting permitting," API President Gerard said at the trade association's annual State of American Energy event today. Overall, permitting reform in an infrastructure package could unlock \$1 trillion in private investment in energy-related projects, Gerard said.

The industry is particularly looking at changes that would allow smoother permitting in New England, where natural gas pipeline projects have stalled in the face of local opposition, Gerard said. The API would heavily lobby FERC on that commission's [review](#) of natural gas pipeline permitting, Gerard said.

"The key is make a decision, hold a decision and allow those dollars and investments to flow," Gerard said pipeline project approvals.

After a raft of policy wins in recent years, including lifting the ban on oil exports and plans to open up vast new areas and offshore acreage for exploration, API list of priorities for the coming year was fairly modest. In addition to the permitting changes, the lobby group is pressing the White House to simply update NAFTA rather than scrapping the pact, and it is seeking changes in the Renewable Fuel standards.

WHAT'S NEXT: The White House and Congress are [still debating](#) when to take up an infrastructure bill.

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